

PRESS RELEASE



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ATTENTION: NEWS EDITORS

August 29, 2013

AMERICAN BASKETBALL PLAYERS PROMOTE SPORTS EDUCATION, TEAMWORK AND LEADERSHIP IN MALAYSIA



U.S. Sports Envoy Brian Cardinal gives pointers to girls from a local high school in Kuala Lumpur.



WNBA legend Sue Wicks leads a warm-up session with kids at YMCA in Kuala Lumpur.

Kuala Lumpur, August 29 – Visiting American basketball Sports Envoys Sue Wicks and Brian Cardinal promoted sports education, teamwork and leadership at ten basketball clinics for more than 600 students, ages 6 to 17, from public, private and religious schools, an orphanage and YMCA.

Sue and Brian are both former American professional basketball players (bios below) and the U.S. Embassy is a proud sponsor of their visit to Malaysia. During this six-day program, the pair worked with coaches from the Malaysia Basketball Association (MABA), Fulbright English Teaching Assistants, Malaysian youth and teachers in Kuala Lumpur, Klang and Kuantan.

“Exchange programs from the State Department's SportsUnited office allow us to reach everyday Malaysians through the language of sports,” explained U.S. Embassy Cultural Affairs Officer Arend Zwartjes. “Throughout the many clinics in Kuala Lumpur and Kuantan, these basketball legends have not only shared their knowledge of the game, they have also shared the values such as sportsmanship, determination and teamwork that are so essential in American sports.”

The Sports Envoy program is managed by SportsUnited, an office of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, and is devoted to sports diplomacy. SportsUnited is cooperating with the National Basketball Association (NBA) of the United States to implement this Sports Envoy program. Through NBA Cares, the league's global community outreach initiative, the NBA players also participate in extensive community outreach efforts in Malaysia.

Sports Envoys are athletes and coaches who travel overseas to lead programs developed by U.S. embassies and consulates. These American coaches and athletes hold sports clinics for young people and their coaches, participate in community outreach activities, and engage youth in a dialogue on the importance of leadership and respect for diversity.

** To download high resolution photos, visit: <http://goo.gl/DXjrgi>*

Bio of Sue Wicks



Sue Wicks is a former basketball player in the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA). She played with the New York Liberty from 1997 to 2002.

Wicks played for Rutgers University from 1984 to 1988. While at Rutgers, she was named a Kodak All-American in 1986, 1987 and 1988 and won numerous Player of the Year awards in 1988. She was a gold medalist in the 1987 Pan-American Games.

Following her college career, she played professionally in Italy, Japan, Spain and Israel before the WNBA was founded. In 1997, she was signed for the inaugural WNBA season by the New York Liberty.

Wicks developed into an All-star player, participating in each WNBA All-Star Game from 1999 to 2002. In 2000, she received the WNBA's top award for sportsmanship, the Kim Perrot Sportsmanship Award. In June 2013 Wicks was inducted into the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame.

Bio of Brian Cardinal



Brian Lee Cardinal, nicknamed "The Custodian" or "The Janitor," is an American professional basketball player who has most recently played for the Dallas Mavericks. Prior to being drafted by the Detroit Pistons of the NBA, Cardinal played college basketball at Purdue University.

He received the nickname "The Custodian" due to the way he cleaned the floor diving for loose balls. Brian left Purdue as the only Boilermaker to receive both the "Mr. Hustle" Award and the "Courage" Award four years in a row.

While at Purdue, Brian won a Gold Medal at the 1998 Goodwill games, where Team USA went 4–1. He was also a member of the 1997 U-22 National Team, which finished 5th in a 12-team field. During his career Brian played for six different NBA teams (Pistons, Wizards, Warriors, Grizzlies, Timberwolves and Mavericks), and one season in the Spanish league playing for Pamesa Valencia.